**Chapter 1**

I liked the way the author introduced the four main areas of focus when teaching; “whom they teach (students), where they teach (learning environment), what they teach (content), and how they teach (instruction)” (2). As a teacher it will be important to not lose sight of any of these focus in order to be successful. In the classroom, Understanding by Design focuses on what we teach and what we need to do to evaluate the work of our students. In contrast, Differentiated Instruction focuses on whom, where, and how we teach. When combined successfully, Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design, “provide structures, tools, and guidance for developing curriculum and instruction based on our current best understandings of teaching and learning” (3).

The main goal of a well-designed curriculum is to develop the deep understanding of the students. In order to do this Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design must be included in all classroom environments. In addition, it is evident that effective curriculum development explores both the priorities and purposes of all given information. In order to keep up with developing society it will be essential that both curriculum and assessment techniques are constantly reviewed. This will ensure the most efficient and understandable ways to focus students and sort through the priorities of the information they are given. Through Understanding by Design and Differentiated Instruction teachers must provide the opportunity for students to develop their abilities to “interpret, apply, shift perspectives, empathize, and self-assess” (8). In order to have a successful classroom environment both Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design should be used on a daily basis.

**Chapter 2**

As I expected, my learning will not cease once I become a teacher. As a future teacher I will constantly be faced with new situations, and I will have to deal with all of these situations in the most professional way possible. In order to be a successful teacher, I will need to continually “seek a deeper understanding of the essence of the subject” (12), and must constantly delve deeper into my understanding of what will help my students to learn. Although a lot of education has been focused on meeting certain standards, it should not be lost on us that helping the students to learn is the main purpose of teaching. It is important to create a solid relationship with all students to not hinder their ability to learn. As a teacher, I will face several diversities in each classroom. It is important to not lose sight of the importance of teaching in order to appease any struggle a student might be facing. It is important that curriculum and a strong relationship both play a role in the success a student has in class.

Focusing on relationships and the environment in which students learn will help them to be successful in school. Understanding challenges and differences among students is known as Responsive Teaching. In order to do this successfully, I will need to focus on the needs and requirements of any students I have in class. This can include learning differences as well as any sort of outside personal factors.

**Chapter 3**

As a future teacher, I will have to deal with a mass amount of standards regarding what I can and can’t teach my students. A main problem with standards is the fact that they are often too broad. It is difficult to teach standards to students when you do not understand what the purpose of the standard is. Another issue is the fact that standards are often too specific, and somehow do not fit into the main spectrum of your class environment. Teachers are also faced with the issue of how these standards will be assessed and determined in the classroom. One way to do this successfully is to begin thinking like the person who will be assessing these standards. If you are able to do this, teaching the students the information they will need to meet these standards will become easier and more effective. In order to teach your students the information they will need, it is important that you understand the learning styles and methods of your students. Doing this will ensure that you are able to teach the information to your students in a way that will help them retain and use the information when it comes to meeting the standards. Using backward design will also help to teach your students the information in a way that will be effective. In order to do this effectively, national and state standards should be used as a starting block for the content the students will need to learn.

**Chapter 4**

Understanding what is important for the students to learn will help the teacher to determine what content material is essential for the students to learn. In order to do this, the teacher must be organized and able to express the content in a way that the students are able to understand and use the information. Our students will learn the information best when the teachers understand why they will need to learn the information. It is essential that students understand why they need to learn the information, and this will help drive their willingness and ability to learn the needed information. Students will retain and understand the information when they understand what it is they are supposed to be accomplishing. In terms of teaching the information, it is essential for a teacher to, “help students understand, accept, and ultimately benefit from their differences” (50). Inside a teachers role is the ability to foster and develop the strengths of the students as individuals. If students are aware of their strengths, and the strengths of those around them, they will be more likely to understand what learning style works for them, and they will be able to understand the information better. As a future teacher, I hope to allow a lot of time for reflection in my classes. I think it is important for students to understand their own abilities, and they should learn to recognize their unique learning styles and any particular aspects they might need to improve their method of learning.

**Chapter 5**

There are specific intentions of standardized tests. Standardized tests are intended to answer assessment questions, but they almost always fall short. Teachers really want to know how the students learn the information and what the varying needs of students are in the classroom. The author establishes three key guidelines to look at when discussing classroom assessment. The first principle is the idea to consider a “photo album versus snapshots” (60). This means that one should look at a student’s collection of work, or work over a period of time, as opposed to looking at one specific document as a form of assessment. This is important because it is virtually impossible for one test to examine and assess all levels of intelligence of all students. There is a major problem with the amount of pressure and emphasis that is placed on *one* test in current education. Another key principle is to examine multiple types of educational goals. This also refers to how we use the information we are given through assessment to enhance the production in the classroom. It is important that the results of assessment are appropriate to what needs to be taught and what needs to be improved in the classroom. Another principle revolves around the idea that the assessment should be linear to the information we are attempting to teach in the classroom. Students will respond better when they understand that what they are doing has a purpose, and is relevant to the their lives as a whole.